



# GLENN COUNTY FARM BUREAU

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June 30, 1998

CALFED Bay-Delta Program  
1416 Ninth St., Suite 1155  
Sacramento, CA 95963

RE: Comments on the CALFED Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR

Glenn County Farm Bureau, representing more than 950 member families in Glenn County, recognize that solving California's long term water supply needs and improving the environmental quality of the Bay-Delta are essential for all Californians. However, we have a number of concerns with the current Draft Programmatic EIS/EIR.

In the current plan, storage is listed as a "variable" component of the solution. The Department of Water Resources has projected that California will be at a 3.0+ million-acre foot (maf) deficit by 2020 given current growth and usage projections. According to CALFED officials at recent hearings, it would take 20-30 years, if included as part of the final plan, to select reservoir site(s) and complete construction. Storage must be an integral component of the final CALFED plan, not a variable component. New water storage is the only solution to solving water supply problems to all of California without siphoning away water from irrigated agriculture, the backbone of our state's economy.

Alternative number three in the draft EIR/EIS proposes an isolated conveyance facility as a possible solution to improve Delta ecosystem health and water delivery reliability problems for south of Delta contractors. This alternative would provide an increase in the potential for more water to be exported from northern California. Alternative number three is unacceptable without complete assurances of ample increased water storage north of the Delta before construction of any isolated facility.

The final CALFED plan must include more concise figures on project costs and benefits, not best guesses. Glenn County farmers are very concerned about who will pay for the proposed projects. If agriculture uses "newly developed" water, will it be expected to pay for the facilities that make that possible at a higher rate than the exchanged "cheaper" water diverted for other uses? This could put a burden on agriculture that would have negative effects on our rural and state economy.

Many of the 700+ recommendations outlined in the Environmental Restoration Programmatic Plan are based on speculation, not scientific fact. No recommendations should be based on science or technology that doesn't yet exist. For example, to date the largest fish screen designed is the Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District screen at 3,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). In the proposed project alternatives, it calls for fish screens that are 15,000 cfs. This has never been done successfully. If the screens are built and they turn out to be "fish grinders" instead of fish barriers, it could be extremely costly and exacerbate the current problems our farmers face with respect to salmon protection.

In the "Watershed Enhancement Plan", private property rights protection needs to be addressed explicitly. Although the document states "activities will only take place were a community consensus exists..." this does little to protect the individual.



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Glenn County, as does California, depends on irrigated agriculture for the support of its rural economy. We recognize that new water development will require some land to be taken out of agriculture production. But, CALFED proposes to convert hundreds of thousands of acres of prime farmland with good water rights. Farmland retirement cannot be considered a feasible option for increasing water supplies for urban, industrial or environmental uses.

Finally, CALFED must strengthen water rights and honor the government's long-standing promise to protect regions where water originates. It must not base its solutions on redirection of agricultural water and conversion of farmland.

Glenn County farmers want CALFED to succeed, but we won't accept solutions that don't benefit agriculture in our region and statewide.

Sincerely,

Cliff Perez, President

Glenn County Farm Bureau

CP:sm



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